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# THOUGHTS TO LIVE BY

## Volume 2

BY

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# 365 THOUGHTS TO LIVE BY

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**B"H**

# INTRODUCTION

The following are 365 maxims that are an attempt to capture the spirit of Judaism as it is illuminated by the teachings of Chassidic philosophy. Many of these thoughts were based on or inspired by the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Each one of these memes can easily be elaborated on to form an entire book. However, the purpose of these pithy messages is simply to ignite a spark within us.

I am publishing this collection in honor of the wedding of my daughter Peshy to Nosson Zand **שיחיו** on the 13th of Tammuz, 5718.

It is my fervent hope and prayer that these thoughts will add a little bit more light to the world that will dispel the last remnants of darkness of exile and thereby contribute to the Final Redemption through our righteous Moshiach, without any further delay.

**Heschel Greenberg**
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# 1

Yom Kippur is much more than a Day of Atonement.
It is a day of "At-one-ment" where we experience total unity with G-d.

# 2

On Yom Kippur G-d says to us:
"I don't need your gold, I want your soul."
In unconventional times, like Yom Kippur, we must transcend the "gold standard."
We must give our pure untainted and unadorned souls to G-d.

# 3

The Yom Kippur lottery conveys the message that while nothing in life is arbitrary there are things that defy logic. Yom Kippur introduces us to that higher dynamic, which enables us to change.

# 4

Although it sounds irrational, the highest and lowest realms can reside in the same person or situation.

# 5

There is an intrinsic quality to life.
The greatest quality of life is the quality of life itself.

# 6

Life to be experienced in its fullest sense must be one of plurality dedicated to a singularity.

# 7

The beauty of Judaism is that while it encourages us to soar to the greatest spiritual heights, it still considers our transformation of the physical world to be its primary focus.

Indeed, when we fuse the two movements together we get the Messianic symphony.

# 8

Reach for the stars with your feet on the ground.

# 9

Motivated by *our* selfish spiritual interests, spirituality and materiality are irreconcilable opposites.

Motivated by *G-d's* interests they are not only compatible; they complement each other.

# 10

"Respecting parents is the equivalent of respecting G-d, their partner in our creation."

*The Talmud*

# 11

Respecting the Shabbat is the equivalent of respecting G-d even as we indulge in the physical pleasures of life.

# 12

Shabbos is G-d's invitation to us to enter into His "space."

Honoring parents invites G-d to enter into *our* space.

# 13

Holiness is defined by our ability to live a G-dly existence in all aspects of life.

# 14

Self-Esteem should be replaced with Soul-Esteem, the true self

# 15

Love and Unity are the catalysts that bring us to the Final Redemption

# 16

The most difficult negative trait is envy.

The antidote to envy is loving our fellow as ourselves, the "Great Principle of Torah.

You can't be jealous of yourself

# 17

The ultimate goal is not unity but unity within diversity.

# 18

Revenge is not very sweet

The key to healing our divisions is to defuse conflicts.

# 19

In the Messianic Age all of the different classes (non-Jew, Jew, Kohain, Levi, Yisroel, etc.) will remain even as we will experience the greatest feeling of unity.

Every class will realize its potential to the fullest

# 20

Why is there so much juvenile crime and violence now?

Before Moshiach powerful youthful energy is revealed.

Parents and teachers have the responsibility to steer this energy in the right direction.

They should not ignore it or suppress it.

# 21

Honest introspection demands that we don't overlook our flaws.

Honest introspection also demands that we don't overlook our qualities and virtues.

# 22

Honest introspection I not just for individuals.

It is also certainly true for our people as a whole.

We must not overlook our flaws and our virtues.

# 23

Moral decisions have to involve the realization of what our actions cause collectively and individually.

# 24

Exile is a deception and it robs us of our soul's nutrition.

Anyone with a shred of integrity cannot tolerate staying in exile and with heartfelt passion pleads and indeed demands the Redemption.

# 25

It is axiomatic in Judaism, that when a person is given a challenge, he or she is also given the ability to meet that challenge.

Ours is the challenge of Galus.

We have the capacity to meet that challenge by bringing the Redemption!

# 26

Galus-exile is a time of disrupted Shalom Bayis-Domestic Peace.

It is caused by spiritual blindness.

Moshiach will open our eyes to see the G-dly and goodly in everything and everyone.

# 27

We are commanded to rebuke our fellow. Yet we must not cause division amongst ourselves.

Successful rebuking requires love and empathy.

## 28

Judaism is replete with Paradoxes.

Seven of its paradoxes are represented by the seven double Torah portions.

## 29

Asceticism has its place in Jewish thought and life.

However, denial of the physical is at best a preparation for the time when we will "have our cake and eat it too" in the most holy fashion.

## 30

Blindness comes in many forms.

The most challenging form is when our eyes our wide open with 20-20 vision, yet we fail to see the Divine in everything.

This is the challenge of Galus-exile and will be remedied with Moshiach.

# 31

One of Judaism's many paradoxes is that it is simultaneously the most mystical and most rational belief system.

# 32

Transforming curses into blessings is the ultimate expression of G-d's true unity because it proves that evil has no power of its own, but to serve
G-d's purpose in creation.

Ultimately, even the curses will be transformed into blessings.

# 33

Moses and Moshiach's commanding the respect of the entire world lies in their ability to see with "both" eyes.

This clarity of vision is also what will characterize the entire world in the Messianic Era that will be ushered in by Moshiach.

# 34

Earth shattering events are indeed very appealing to us.

But, even the most insignificant act can forever change the world.

We cannot fathom the ripple and snowballing effect all the good that we do has on the world.

# 35

There are two dimensions of good:

Good that is overt and easily accessed and good that is covert and is hard to access.

We will fully experience both forms of good in the Messianic Age

# 36

There must be a separation between the holy and the ordinary.

But the ordinary is also holy and replete with meaning.

# 37

There are two distinct scenarios for the unfolding of the Messianic drama.

If we are not worthy, Moshiach will come at the appointed time in a natural and non-dramatic way.

If we are meritorious, Moshiach's coming will be hastened and will manifest itself in a spectacular way.

# 38

To hasten the Messianic Age we must realize that:

Redemption is reality.

Our actions benefit the world.

We must also hope, yearn and anticipate the coming of Moshiach and that it should be right now!

## 39

G-d knows our needs better than we do.

We need to pray to G-d so that we gain clarity as to what we really need and what we should want.

## 40

Torah must be augmented by good deeds.

If Torah study does not lead to action it is not real Torah study.

## 41

Jealousy will only be erased in the advanced stages of the Messianic Age.

Nevertheless there are ways of tempering it even now.

When a person is engaged in the higher form of conquest and seeks to spread the awareness of G-d to the entire world, that individual will have channeled the innate need for conquest in a positive fashion.

## 42

Humility is not denial of one's virtues and accomplishments.

True humility is realizing that all your talents are expressions of the Divine.

## 43

The phenomenon of identifying with our enemies when we receive some measure of good from them is a well-known psychological phenomenon known as the "Stockholm Syndrome."

When a Jew identifies with and pays homage to exile forces he digs himself deeper into exile.

## 44

A Jew cannot be indifferent to the pain and suffering, and must cry out to G-d for Him to see our pain.

But a Jew cannot wallow in the negative even if it is for the purpose of escaping it.

Dwelling inordinately on the bitterness of Galus can cause us to be depressed and fall into Galus despair, thereby preventing us from escaping its grip.

## 45

While we inhabit the world of time and space, we can transcend it, when we take refuge in the Tent of Meeting—houses of Worship and Torah study.

## 46

True joy is determined not by how you feel but by how you make another feel.

## 47

Complete joy is determined by how you make everyone feel!

## 48

Our quest for Moshiach is for the Moshiach who will, in Maimonides' words, facilitate total Torah observance.

To the extent that our messianic fervor takes us in that direction it is the fulfillment of Judaism's directive that we "anticipate (and prepare for) Moshiach's coming every day."

## 49

It is incredible that the Previous Rebbe—as well as the Rebbe, his successor—in addition to their leadership of the Jewish people in all matters, have produced an unprecedented amount of scholarly literature as well as voluminous correspondence with tens of thousands of Jews.

# 50

It is estimated that the Previous Rebbe and the Rebbe each have penned around 100,000 letters, as well as several hundred volumes of scholarly works between them!

# 51

The last generation of exile has been characterized by our Sages as the "heels of Moshiach."

The heel's distinction is that it uplifts the entire body.

Our generation will bring completion to and uplift all preceding generations; the hearts and heads of our nation.

# 52

Our generation is paradoxically the lowest generation of history, being the farthest removed from the defining experience of Sinai.

Yet, it is also the most powerful generation because it is the closest to the ultimate period of G-dly light that will shine in the Messianic Era.

# 53

We are the "bridge" generation linking the past period of exile with the future period of Redemption.

## 54

Our generation is the most spiritually rich one because we have the accumulated good of the past at our disposal.

We are like the child standing on the shoulders of giants.

## 55

All it takes for us to cross the bridge into the Age of Redemption is one seemingly insignificant mitzvah that takes perhaps one moment to do.

## 56

Even one mitzvah can be the proverbial "straw" that will "break the back" of the last vestiges of exile and will bring redemption and salvation to the entire world.

## 57

A phrase, simultaneously, simple and profound is, "thank you."

It acknowledges that the world doesn't revolve around you.

## 58

Humans are capable of saying thank you without even thinking what it means.

Indeed, humans suffer from cognitive dissonance.

The cure is to think what thank you" really means.

## 59

Torah study is where G-d shares His most intimate thoughts with us.

This expresses dramatically His love for us because He allows us to learn and absorb His most intimate knowledge.

While prayer expresses our love for G-d, Torah study reveals His love for us.

## 60

Ultimately and ideally, the holy will influence and permeate the ordinary.

## 61

If one evil person was able to galvanize a nation of tens of millions to carry out the worst genocide in history, how much more so, is the same possible in the realm of goodness.

One person can unleash the positive energy lying dormant in humanity.

## 62

The heathen prophet Bilam was lame and partially blind.

He lacked healthy spiritual legs i.e. faith and was blind to his own state of lowliness.

We defeat the Bilams of the world by strengthening faith and seeing G-d's greatness and our own limits.

## 63

We have become a society in which everything has to be analyzed.

We should allow positive statements of people to remain the way they are on the surface without probing for some hidden agenda.

## 64

Even superficial goodness should be encouraged because it will eventually seep in and can change a person's attitude.

## 65

The Hebrew word for moment can also be translated as movement.

It takes just one moment or movement to turn the whole world around and bring salvation to the entire world.

## 66

Counting days is a Jewish exercise.

Much of Jewish practices require counting up to them.

However, it is not just a means to an end. Counting is intrinsically a holy experience.

## 67

The spiritual exercise of counting is a reflection of how much we count.

If we only knew how much we counted we would never be the same!

## 68

Respect for elders is central to Judaism.

But, we are living in a time that the elders have much to gain from the youth.

When the respect goes in both directions we have fertile environment for Moshiach.

## 69

Love is strongest when it is tested.

Love is tested when we are most vulnerable, down in the dumps and distracted.

G-d demonstrated His love for us precisely in these situations.

# 70

The bond between G-d and the Jewish people is innate and immutable.

Torah, G-d's wisdom, is the medium which illuminates and activates their relationship.

# 71

Life is about appreciating all the gifts that were given to us by our forebears.

But true life requires that we do not rely on those gifts.

We must roll up our own sleeves and forge ahead to bring Moshiach!

# 72

The Torah connects us to G-d and to each other.

It is G-d's communication with the Jewish people and our communication with Him.

# 73

The Jewish people have weathered all types of storms. That we survived the threat of annihilation and assimilation is testimony to the Jewish people's immortality.

# 74

Besides history's worst physical threat to our existence, the Holocaust, Jews have been subjected to two existential challenges.

The first is the challenge of secularism.

The second, no less daunting, is the challenge to forge ahead towards the Final Redemption through Moshiach.

# 75

The Jewish experience can be divided into four categories that reflect four aspects of our relationship with G-d:

a) Torah study, b) prayer, c) performance of Mitzvot and d) serving G-d in all of our ways by doing everything with a higher motive and purpose.

# 76

To see the good in every Jew one must first see the person as part of a whole healthy and vibrant organism: the Jewish nation.

# 77

There is nothing more desirable than passion for G-d and His teachings.

Yet that passion must be directed towards making our world a "dwelling place for G-d."

# 78

Education is the art of revealing something ostensibly new but was always a part of the student's consciousness.

# 79

The revelation at Sinai "merely" revealed our innate connection to G-d and His teachings that was instilled in us by our Patriarchs and Matriarchs.

# 80

The depth of happiness in our lives is in direct proportion with the depth of giving to others.

The Messianic Age will feature the purist and most intense form of joy because we will then be motivated to give in the most powerful and profound way.

# 81

In these Messianic times, our focus on unity should shift from repairing the past disunity to being prepared for the ultimate unity of the future.

*The Rebbe*

# 82

The Torah was given in a desert; a place where we thirst for

much more than what we have.

The "desert" dynamic reminds us to pay attention to our soul's' cry, "when will I enter the Promised Land where my soul's thirst for G-dliness will be satisfied."

## 83

Humanity is often synonymous with the opposite of truth.

Torah is the epitome of truth and consistent truth.

Every Mitzvah we do imbues us with some of that G-dly truth.

## 84

When doing a Mitzvah, we must ask ourselves, "What effect did the Mitzvah have on me?"

## 85

One of Judaism's paradoxes is that while G-d is infinite He cares for every detail of our lives and our actions.

## 86

The Menorah was intended to illuminate the souls of the Jewish people.

Their souls, which were already on fire, would now be inspired to climb higher and higher.

The goal of the Menorah was to awaken deeper and deeper spiritual powers.

## 87

Our generation is very special.

We are a fiercely independent minded people.

Yet, we nevertheless yield to G-d's will and seek ways to follow every Mitzvah with precision and then more.

## 88

A Jew can never run away from his or her connection to Mount Sinai.

When we try to escape, our soul picks up a heavenly voice from Sinai that beckons us to return.

## 89

The ultimate challenge is to fuse heightened spirituality with everyday life.

## 90

When Aaron lit the Menorah all of his thoughts were directed towards the center, the unifying element of the Jewish community.

He was single-minded about his role as the one to inspire and uplift all of the Jewish people by focusing on that aspect of our Jewishness that we all share.

## 91

Kabbalah teaches us that the specific details involved in the performance of a Mitzvah are not arbitrary.

When we perform a physical act in the course of doing a Mitzvah, our physical movements parallel the spiritual effects of our Mitzvah.

## 92

When we grow in appreciation for and closeness to G-d, what seemed to be ideal in the past is severely wanting now.

## 93

Counsel is more than acquisition of knowledge in all of its forms.

It is the ability to distill that knowledge, removing the undesirable ideas that can taint and distort the thinking of even one endowed with the greatest intellectual capacity.

## 94

The Lubavitcher Rebbe cited the words of the Midrash:

"The Time of your Redemption has arrived!"

The Rebbe declared that we are on the threshold of the Redemption.

What we need now is the desire and courage to cross over this threshold into the "Sanctuary courtyard"—the Final Redemption!

## 95

There is only one land and one people who enjoy a symbiotic relationship.

That is the people and the Land of Israel.

## 96

When a community of Jews is involved in a Mitzvah it introduces an element of holiness that is truly infinite.

No matter how many excuses we may have for separating ourselves from the communal effort, it will not make up for the lost spiritual gain.

## 97

The Land of Israel is G-d's special gift to the Jewish people. It is not ours to give away.

Giving it away is not why we traveled this long, arduous journey.

# 98

Being in Israel is also a mindset that encourages us to conform to G-d's will.

The phrase "Eretz Yisrael-the Land of Israel" can also be translated as "the land that expresses its desire to follow G-d's will."

# 99

Our generation might be less spiritually sophisticated than preceding ones, but, our ability to remain faithful despite all odds makes us eminently qualified and deserving to witness and experience the last leg of the journey.

# 100

Mitzvos come in many varieties and are all good.

However, a Mitzvah stands out when it is done with excellence; both objective and subjective.

We should acknowledge those whose Mitzvah observances express that excellence.

# 101

When we are unaware of our G-d-given talents that we could have used to make the world a better place—that is a major loss.

When a Jew is unaware of his or her soul's existence and its potential, he or she has suffered a major loss. There can be no greater loss than a Jew who is oblivious to his or her Jewish heritage.

## 102

When a person "kills" time, those lost moments are far more significant than the loss of material objects.

## 103

There are two dimensions of happiness:

Being happy and making others happy.

These two dimensions are paralleled by external and internal joy.

## 104

The message of Judaism is that to reach a genuine spiritual high one must spend years, indeed a lifetime, in its pursuit.

Spiritual gains require a life of devotion to G-d's commandments, coupled with profound study and deep meditation.

# 105

Jewish Messianism is not about gaining freedom from observance of the commandments.

On the contrary!

It is an insistent demand for us to plunge into the pursuit of holiness, by self-refinement, study, observance of the Mitzvos and personal dedication to the ideals of love and unity.

# 106

Depression, the Chassidic masters say, is not technically a sin, but it can lead the person down a slippery slope which can ultimately lead to the transgressing of all sins.

# 107

Marriage is the most powerful institution in Judaism, and making it holy, not shunning it, is the ideal.

# 108

The Zohar teaches that marriage is the reunion of two half souls that were separated at birth.

Marriage makes the soul complete and fully capable of taking on the challenge of changing the world.

# 109

Moses was overwhelmed, awe stricken and humbled when he was shown the Jews of the last generation of exile.

He was given a view into the future where he saw people who could remain steadfastly committed to the Torah, despite the suffering, hardships and temptation.

*The Alter Rebbe: Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi*

# 110

Compromise of values, complacency and comfort may be signs of immobility and stagnation.

They derive from a distorted picture of one's purpose and capabilities, as well as a jaundiced and jaded image of the world's potential.

# 111

To break out of a state of complacency and stagnation we must open our eyes to see the unblemished truth of existence that lies below surface appearances.

# 112

When our eyes are open to see the road ahead of us and the boundless opportunities that are available to us, it will shake us out of our state of complacency and ignite the spark in us to seek unadulterated goodness and G-dliness.

# 113

The irony of exile existence is that we tend to glorify and revere the very forces that withhold all of the kindness to which we are entitled.

# 114

In the future Messianic Era we will again return to a state of complete alignment that existed at the time of Creation.

The physical world will mirror the spiritual world and there will be no need for correction.

# 115

The secret to our survival is our resistance to Galus-exile and to all forms of authority; even those that we may pledge allegiance to.

Our essence only accepts G-d's authority.

# 116

There is one question we should always be asking:

"What is the connection of what we do with Mount Sinai?"

The value of each and every experience should be measured by its ability to express the ideal of Mount Sinai.

# 117

Contemporary society's pendulum is swinging from one extreme to the other:

One extreme tells us that the Earth is ours to plunder. It deifies man.

The other extreme deifies the Earth.

Torah insists that we glorify only the one G-d who is the Master of all.

# 118

Humility is a virtue.

Pride is a vice.

Humbly expressing pride in who we are is the ideal.

# 119

People are now discovering the damage caused by verbal abuse.

Our Sages, basing their words on the Torah, recognized the damage it can cause and regarded it as a grievous sin.

# 120

Helping the needy is only a complete Mitzvah when you also remove the stigma of poverty from the recipient.

# 121

To live life to the fullest one must first rise above the limits of life and instill that heightened view into life itself.

# 122

Judaism is all-encompassing.

Judaism demands that we have both a public and private involvement with Torah and Mitzvos.

# 123

True freedom is when no barriers remain; whether they are internal or external.

# 124

Our claim to the Land of Israel is not political, International law or even historical.

It was given to us by G-d.

Observing the agricultural Mitzvos regarding the Land is our way of highlighting and maintaining our connection to the land.

# 125

Questions that demoralize are to be rejected.

Questions that inspire us to action are to be embraced.

Questions that get us excited and generate joy and enthusiasm are the most desirable.

## 126

Freedom is not defined by the license to do anything we want.

Rather, it is the ability to live in accordance with the core beliefs and desire of our soul.

## 127

Never before have we witnessed the incredible miracles of medicine to preserve and prolong life.

Yet, never before have we seen such erosion of life's intrinsic value.

Our challenge today is to allow light and life to prevail over darkness.

## 128

Humans are in need of walls that protect and preserve their spiritual integrity.

The only solid wall is the invisible one; Torah study and the G-d given commandments.

# 129

Judaism is two pronged: Torah and Mitzvos.

While Mitzvos liberate our bodies; Torah liberates our mind.

# 130

Torah study is the preeminent influence in our lives.

Mitzvos are external; Torah is internal.

While Mitzvos make us holy, Torah study defines us.

# 131

Moshiach will enable us to change the sub-text of our lives by revealing the inner core of our souls.

Moshiach will empower us to change the context of life by opening our eyes to see the whole picture.

Moshiach will also change the text of our lives itself by instilling more soul and vitality in our lives and actions.

# 132

Vanquishing evil takes four forms:

First, doing Teshuvah with passion and love.

Second, resisting evil.

Third, study the teachings of Torah that deal with evil.

Fourth, is to study the inner dimension of Torah which transcends evil.

## 133

What makes us fundamentally human is not our intelligence and feelings.

Rather it is the interplay between them.

## 134

There are two visions for the Third Beis Hamikdash.

The first is that it will be man-made. This symbolizes how all our efforts now are the building blocks of the Temple.

## 135

The second scenario for the Third Beis Hamikdash is for it to descend from Heaven.

This symbolizes how G-d will crown our efforts with His unparalleled holiness.

## 136

Confession of sins is a surgical process.

It cannot be accompanied by excuses, even legitimate ones.

One must be brutally honest in excising every trace of evil.

# 137

We treat viewing the flaws of other differently from the way we judge ourselves.

When dealing with others we always try to give them the benefit of the doubt.

# 138

Torah, among all of its other qualities, is also the best insulation from all the negative forces in the world.

# 139

Torah helps us look for the good in everyone and everything.

From the perspective of Torah, even adversity is seen as hidden good.

The Messianic Age will change our focus to see all the hidden good fully revealed.

# 140

Self-Discovery is an exciting experience because it reveals a surprising subterranean dimension of our personality.

However, the ideal is that we don't give up our familiar, conscious, and external identities.

# 141

Judaism focuses on generating light, preserving life and sanctifying the world.

These three objectives are fulfilled especially by women observing three special Mitzvos of lighting Shabbos and Yom Tov candles, family-purity and the separation of Challah.

# 142

The head/brain contains all of the energy of the entire body.

The "head" or first word of the Torah, "Bereishis," contains within it all of the Torah and its objective to lead us to the Messianic Age.

# 143

When we are overcome with fear and anxiety, we should reflect on the source and root of that fear in our soul, which is an expression of reverence and awe for G-d.

# 144

Reflecting on our soul's essential awe of G-d can help us remove the painful and debilitating feelings of fear.

# 145

A most basic human instinct is the hope for a better world.

This hope was implanted in us from the very beginning of creation.

It is the underlying meaning of the first Torah verse: "In the beginning."

The goal of creation was to actualize the plan that was embedded in the world from the moment of creation.

## 146

The very first letter of the Torah translates as "because."

The most powerful word, arguably, is "because."

Because it says that there is a cause and that Creation is purposeful and that we are not accidents of birth.

## 147

Unity is central to Judaism: One G-d, one Torah, One Jewish nation.

Yet, the Torah begins with the letter *beis*, which is the number two.

It's G-d's way of saying "I want a relationship with you."

It's what makes the connection between G-d and His world.

## 148

Ours is a world of falsehood.

Torah is the very essence of objective and absolute truth.

By connecting to the Torah we can transform our falsehood into truth.

## 149

We would be living in a perfect world if we could demonstrate that we are needed at least as much as we need.

The two accounts of Creation of Man reflect this balance.

## 150

There are two approaches to disciplining others. One can use light tactics or dark tactics.

The Messianic Era is an Age of light.

Preparing for it prefers using the "light" approach.

## 151

G-d destroyed worlds before creating ours.

We emulate G-d by removing the limiting structures we impose on ourselves.

## 152

Every nation is entitled to have a land for itself.

Only one nation has an inseparable and qualitative bond with its land:

The Land of Israel for the People of Israel.

# 153

Criticism helps to eradicate negative traits.

Positive reinforcement helps to reveal and actualize our positive traits.

We live in the age where we need the latter rather than the former.

# 154

One of the greatest miracles of nature is the birth of a child.

Judaism wants us to procreate in intellectual and spiritual ways as well.

This will prepare us for the "New Age" of Moshiach

# 155

Death and evil are not natural phenomena.

It was superimposed on us by Adam and Eve.

Life and goodness are natural.

The more good we do we separate the evil from the good and death from life.

# 156

There are three focuses which lead us in the right direction:

G-d, us and the rest of the world.

To lead a wholesome life we cannot leave any item out of the equation.

## 157

A beautiful person is one who thinks out of the box, is consistent and for who the means are just as important as the end.

This person lives a rich and full life every moment.

This is the Esrog-Beautiful-fruit personality.

## 158

The power to fight evil is contained within the evil itself.

## 159

The pursuit of happiness is synonymous with the search for our inner soul.

As long as we forget that search, genuine happiness remains an elusive goal.

## 160

A wise man once said, “the greatest joy comes from the resolution of doubts.

The difference between an exile and Redemption mindset is the degree to which we harbor no doubts about our role in

this world.

# 161

Life is about making or missing opportunities.

Even when doing something wrong, we should be bothered most by what we did not do right.

# 162

Torah comes in four dimensions known as Pardes, a delightful orchard.

While we must know when and how to indulge, we must be prepared to master all of them.

# 163

We are conditioned to believe in imperfection.

That is true for one who lives with an exile mindset.

In the liberated world of the future we will enjoy: perfect emunah-faith, Torah, refuah-healing, and Geulah-Redemption.

The initials of these four entities form the word Etrog—the perfect fruit.

# 164

Humankind's obsession with knowledge is not inherently evil.

What's evil is the glorification of knowledge above G-d and G-dly behavior.

When knowledge is used to rationalize evil it too becomes sullied.

# 165

A question has the capacity to jolt us out of our reverie.

The first question in the Torah is G-d asking: *Ayekah*-here are you?

This is the question we must always ask ourselves.

# 166

There are two ways of posing a challenge to another.

We can either shout the question angrily or ask it softly and lovingly.

The latter approach is the more successful one.

# 167

Jealousy and rivalry are the most primitive forms of evil.

They will be the last to be eliminated.

Our mission, at the end of this phase of history, is to prepare for that age.

# 168

It is axiomatic in Judaism that humans and animals are world apart.

Animals are part of nature.

Humans are the outsiders who were charged with the responsibility to uplift nature.

# 169

Ideologies generally stake out a position and true followers keep to it faithfully and rigidly.

In Judaism, the goal is to incorporate and balance opposite traits and directions, even while leaning in a certain direction.

# 170

Torah is a paradox.

It is the height of our intellectual pursuits.

And it is utterly unfathomable!

# 171

Clothing serves two functions:

It removes our shame and lends dignity.

Mitzvos are spiritual clothing.

They remove the soul's embarrassment in its state of nakedness.

And they also royal robes that brings us dignity.

## 172

G-d does not need our sacrifices. We need them.

To offer a sacrifice and think that G-d owes us the world is a blemished offering.

That was the difference between Cain and Abel.

## 173

Truth and Peace are the two most elusive traits and they can almost never co-exist.

Yet, it is precisely these two traits that will be validated in the imminent period of Redemption and will dwell harmoniously together

## 174

We are now standing on the threshold of a new age of Redemption, which parallels the Exodus from Egypt.

We must be mindful of the threat that comes from the modern day Philistines; from those who deride and mock all attempts at our liberating ourselves from the shackles of exile.

# 175

Moses' greatness is not measured by what he was, i.e., his knowledge, piety etc., but by what he was *not*.

Moses was so close to G-d that he was totally self-effacing.

# 176

Moses had completely surrendered his ego, not by falsely denying his own qualities, but by recognizing how everything he possessed was from G-d.

His every deed, word or thought, every fiber of his being, was devoted to G-d. Every aspect of his life revolved around G-d.

# 177

Moses, knowing that the Jewish people will be going through an arduous exile prepares them by taking Joseph's essence (literally: bones) with him.

Jewish leaders of each and every generation, personify the Joseph trait of caring for those lost souls, so that no Jew will be left behind when Moshiach takes us out of exile.

# 178

In recent times we have seen hidden forms of extraordinary good coming to the surface.

This is a symptom of our proximity to the Messianic Age, when all the treasures of the world will be revealed.

# 179

We have witness hidden layers of evil coming to the fore in recent times. This is so to afford us the opportunity to rid ourselves of the hidden vestiges of evil before the Final Redemption.

# 180

When G-d created the world, Kabbalah teaches us, He did so by using the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, which are actually divine instruments, or the DNA of creation.

# 181

The 17th century Shaloh teaches that as soon as the news of the Redemption is announced, we will sing praise for the future miracles even before they will happen.

Just by hearing that the Redemption with its attendant miracles are imminent will suffice to inspire us with faith, joy, and song.

# 182

A wedding is a combination of two features:

It is a reenactment of the first union of Adam and Eve that miraculously brought together two opposites.

It is also a portent, a sample and a taste of the wedding of the future, where the unity of opposites will be experienced on the highest level.

## 183

In the initial stage of the Messianic Age there will be no fundamental changes to the nature of the world.

The natural world will be exposed to previously hidden dimensions of G-dly knowledge.

In the second stage of the Messianic Age, the entire world will be subsumed into that sea of G-dly knowledge.

## 184

The "letters" with which G-d created the universe are forever vested within creation.

If G-d would withdraw them, the world would revert to its original state of nothingness.

## 185

For close to two thousand years, our persistent prayers reflect our passion and obsession with returning home to the Promised Land, led by Moshiach who will usher in the true and complete Redemption.

# 186

The Torah view of nature is that it is not our ally not our enemy.

# 187

Torah study is the antidote to Amalek who sows doubt and confusion in our lives.

Torah gives us clear direction.

Torah is always associated with light because it shines the light of truth and exposes the true meaning and purpose of everyone and everything.

# 188

One approach to miracles is that when a person devoted to G-d wants to realize his divine mission, nature itself will accommodate that effort.

This is so not because nature will change, but rather because nature itself was so programmed at the very time of creation.

# 189

There are times when we are preoccupied with lofty matters such as prayer, literally or figuratively.

G-d then says to us, “Be silent, stop praying, get up and help another person split their sea.”

# 190

For close to 2,000 years, the Jewish people collectively have not forgotten that their real home is in G-d's home; in the Land of Israel, in Jerusalem and the Holy Temple.

# 191

Moses' role in the war against Amalek required of him to ignite the spark of Moses within each and every Jew.

No Divine staff could do this.

Moses had to inspire the Jews to change and direct their hearts heavenward by raising his own hands heavenward.

# 192

After living through thousands of years of exile, we, as a people, did not and will not lose our faith and trust that G-d would redeem us and bring Moshiach.

Even in the Death Camps, thousands of Jews went to their deaths singing, yes singing, the melody to the words "I believe with perfect faith in the coming of Moshiach."

# 193

The hope and trust in the ultimate Redemption will pay off.

When the ultimate miracle finally arrives, we will offer a twofold and two-dimensional praise to G-d:

Thanks for all the faith and trust we had in You, and thank you again G-d for the actual Redemption.

# 194

It is axiomatic in Judaism that a community is considerably more than the sum total of its components.

There is a special holiness that is introduced into a community that is infinitely greater than the any of its parts.

For example, a *minyan*, is much more than just a collection of ten people in one room.

It is a completely new entity with its own identity that provides us with the opportunity to recite special prayers such as the Kadish.

# 195

Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi (the founder of the Chabad-Lubavitch movement, known as the Alter Rebbe) once remarked:

"Speech is the pen of the heart, song is the pen of the soul."

While we can express our ideas and feelings by way of speech, we cannot express our inner soul with the spoken word.

To reveal one's innermost spiritual sentiments, one must have song.

# 196

The lesson from the narrative of the Jews going into the sea is that in times of crises there is no time to stand on ceremony.

When it comes to times of crises, even Benjamin, the youngest of the tribes can override the system and jump into the sea.

# 197

When we receive pleasure or derive benefit from one mitzvah, and no benefit from another, the latter mitzvah takes precedence.

The more a mitzvah "imposes" on us and demands of us to "bend," the greater is its effect on ourselves.

# 198

When we find ourselves situated between the proverbial hard place and the rock we must go in the direction that leads us inexorably towards the Geulah.
Anything that takes our eyes off that road is a deviation from the G-d given plan.

# 199

The Exodus set them free from the paganism of Egypt.

It removed the shackles of "landism" from their souls, exposing them to the all-consuming spiritual truth of the sea.

The Exodus liberated them from the prison of self, allowing them to merge with the infinite essence of all.

# 200

If we had to find one word that describes Judaism it could be the word “totality.”

While the Torah values every single detail of a Mitzvah, its goal is to realize total involvement with every nuance of life in every Mitzvah.

# 201

Angels are spiritual beings that are in a constant state of devotion to Him.

Obviously, humans who have inclinations for evil are spiritually inferior to angels.

However, when G-d showed His love for the Israelites at the time of the splitting of the Sea of Reeds G-d removed the angels from their pre-eminent position ahead of the Israelites and put them behind.

By doing so, G-d demonstrated that the Israelites were truly superior to the angels.

# 202

There are two general perspectives to everything.

The first is the view that is the natural outgrowth of the "land," i.e., the day to day exigencies of life.

And then there is the perspective that comes from wisdom; specifically Divine wisdom that is embodied in the Torah that sees things from "above."

# 203

As the national election season heats up, we have to remember that our salvation does not come from an elected official, no matter how human, noble and charismatic he may be.

We should not rely on a king or others in power who themselves are merely pawns in the hands of G-d.

# 204

Most of the time we pray for Redemption because of all the negatives we now have in our world and in our personal lives.

Sometimes the emotional stimuli for wanting to get out of exile can come from the opposite *positive* direction; incredible positive changes have been seen in the world.

These changes, the Rebbe revealed to us, are a taste of and prelude to the "real thing—the true and complete Redemption.

All of these positive developments, ranging from the collapse of the Soviet Union, last bastion of anti-Jewish and anti-Torah tyranny, to many incredible medical advances, should whet our appetite for the "full gourmet banquet" that will follow, imminently.

## 205

Freedom can be experienced on many levels.

To the extent that we follow the dictates of the G-dly soul over the desires of the animal soul we determine the degree to which we are free.

## 206

If we do the right thing for ulterior motives our state of freedom is imperfect.

When we are not totally free, we can easily relapse into a state of servitude to our base instincts and animalistic tendencies.

## 207

When our egos swell, it is likely that we will postpone the execution of a Mitzvah.

We will try to find—whether consciously or subconsciously—a good rationalization for doing the Mitzvah in terms of what is in it for us.

# 208

A person, who is consumed with a sense of self-importance, will never defer to someone else's judgment.

Only a person who is humble will readily yield to G-d's will even before they fully understand its subjective and objective value.

# 209

The model of true freedom is the Exodus from Egypt.

The Israelites were not liberated to be free.

They were liberated to become a nation that would stand at Mount Sinai and receive G-d's constitution—the Torah with all of its commandments.

# 210

From the time of the Exodus onward, we became an inherently free people.

We cannot be truly subservient to others. It goes against our very nature and essence.

For a Jew to thrust himself into slavery is a self-destructive act.

# 211

The message of liberation must penetrate to the very core of our existence and that it reveals that part of our soul that is immortal and everlasting.

# 212

All great Jewish leaders from Moses to Moshiach are the matchmakers between G-d and Israel.

A matchmaker does not separate between the two parties. Rather he or she brings them together.

Moses and Moshiach are the ultimate unifiers.

# 213

Art is imitation of the physical world, which is itself an imitation of the spiritual worlds.

When we imitate G-d we experience the ultimate art-form because we are imitating something real.

# 214

Moses was expected to not only enter in to Pharaoh's palace, but to penetrate his inner sanctum, where he was in his most secure, physically and psychologically, space and taunt him by his very presence, thereby destroying his power.

Moses found this to be daunting.

For this new task, he was in need of G-d's assurance that He would accompany Moses.

Life is filled with surprise and confrontation. Like Moses, we find ourselves in situations where we come face to face with the greatest challenge of our life.

It is precisely at these times that we need and receive G-d's special support.

## 215

Curses are not real.

Our default position is our blessed relationship with G-d as our Father.

The definition of a curse is the hiding of that natural relationship.

## 216

The Exodus from Egypt contained the potential energy for all subsequent liberations.

## 217

Even in the Messianic Age we will continue to express our gratitude to G-d for the Exodus from Egypt.

Without freedom we acquired at the Exodus we would not have been able receive the Torah and we could never reach the Messianic Age.

# 218

Our sages tell us that "one who saves but one person is as if he had saved an entire universe."

Whenever we succeed in extricating one Jew from his or her state of alienation from G-d, we have, in effect, liberated an entire world.

# 219

Judaism is not about religion.

It is about transforming the world; making every year, month, week, day, hour, minute and second count.

# 220

Today is not just today. It is the accumulation of sanctified segments of time that represent a powerful surge of unprecedented energy.

# 221

The weekdays that we sanctify with our Mitzvos make the Shabbos that much more meaningful and holy—in addition to the natural sanctity the Shabbos possesses.

And all of the sanctified "weekdays" of our past come together to create the ultimate Sabbath of existence—the era of Moshiach.

# 222

Serving G-d with formality is a positive thing.

But G-d wants us to serve Him in informal ways and informal contexts as well.

# 223

Freedom is not a right; it is an obligation.

Although there are times when we must surrender our freedom for an overriding purpose, we must never allow ourselves to become career servants.

The concept of servitude is only desirable when it is service to G-d.

# 224

A mind/head is a terrible thing to waste.

It is equally objectionable to keep our head immersed in things that are “down,” beneath us.

# 225

There are many forms of domination.

One can exercise control over others or exercise control over oneself.

# 226

The plague of darkness was not just the absence of light but a substantive and palpable form of darkness.

There are times in our lives that we may be missing some light; a temporary condition that can be remedied by the study of a little bit of Torah, a small gesture of kindness, participation in a Holiday celebration etc., for a little bit of light can dispel much darkness.

But, when one is in Mitzraim, when one's mindset and emotions are in a "straight jacket," the darkness becomes palpable.

This darkness is analogous to the black hole phenomenon that doesn't allow any light to exist or escape; it swallows all of the light.

The answer for this kind of darkness is to get out of Mitzraim-Egypt!

# 227

A liberated mindset is to ignore the marketplace of ideas and search within one's own soul and Torah teachings for guidance and inspiration.

# 228

All the reasons that were given for our stay in exile have all since expired.

Why has G-d kept us here anyhow?

One answer: G-d wants us to enter into the Messianic period "fully and ornately dressed."

Rather than just thrust us into a new world of unadulterated goodness and holiness, unprepared, He gives us numerous opportunities to "dress" ourselves, with yet another mitzvah.

Every mitzvah we do now will make us more comfortable with and receptive to the G-dly light that will shine in the Messianic Age.

## 229

White is the color of purity. But a white veneer and a corrupt interior is what gets us into exile.

## 230

Copper and Iron are metaphors for substances that express an inferior spiritual state.

But they also represent the ideal of yearning for higher goals and total transformation.

## 231

We have a Divine soul.

We have received the Torah at Mount Sinai at which time G-d said to each and every one of us, "I am G-d your G-d," in the singular, to indicate that G-d is the life-force and the essence of each individual.

# 232

We have thousands of years of cumulative holiness which was generated by our forebears and has left an indelible mark on the Jewish and world landscape.

And we are now living in the dawn of the Messianic Age, where some of that light can already be seen on the horizon.

Certainly all the formidable obstacles are not sufficient to prevent us from breaking out of the shackles of our exile mentality so as to become receptive to the energies of Redemption.

# 233

Shabbos is a day of rest and serenity.

Shabbos also possesses a secondary theme of liberation; a remembrance of the Exodus from Egypt.

Shabbos affords us the luxury of living in a world of serenity while simultaneously breaking out of stifling boundaries

# 234

The human spirit demands of us to go beyond our comfort zone and break out of the external conventions that are imposed on us as well as overcoming our self-imposed limits.

# 235

There is one aspect of our animal nature that cannot be

salvaged. The part of us that is destructive, spiteful, and hateful must be eliminated.

But the parts of our animal nature such as self-interest, jealousy, pride, desire for pleasure, etc., can and must be harnessed for the good.

## 236

When jealousy motivates us to learn more and do more good for the world; that is a stepping stone to doing good for its own sake.

## 237

True light – the light of the first day of creation; preserved in the commandments associated with light such as Chanukah and Shabbat candles.

This light allows us to see the inner dimension of existence.

## 238

It is not enough for us to realize our natural potential – symbolized by the number seven, the highest number in the natural order.

We must reach the transcendent number eight; the number associated with circumcision and Chanukah, which beckons and challenges us to beyond our nature.

# 239

Judaism is not a religion; it is a part of life.

When it comes to life, we don't want compromised life.

We want and we seek to live our lives to the fullest.

# 240

We must constantly be thinking of the goal, of preparing ourselves for the future Redemption.

On the other hand, we must not let our yearning for the future impede our ability to do our job while we are still here in the last moments of exile. Every day must be filled with the study of Torah and fulfillment of the Mitzvos.

# 241

The goal of Judaism is not the elimination of rebellion and chutzpah, but to harness these forces for the good.

# 242

Jewish education demands that a child (and the child within us) must be encouraged to search, probe, question and seek answers and never be satisfied with what he or she now understands.

The child must also know that there are certain things that are elusive and he or she must also be prepared to accept the reality of that which cannot be fathomed.

# 243

Forgetfulness is a product of alienation from our G-dly soul.

Tanya explains that the reason we forget is because our Animal Soul governs us. Because it is a natural soul, it follows the laws of nature for things to continually deteriorate and decompose. One of those natural effects is the decline in our memories.

# 244

Today is the most important day of your life.

Today is the day we receive the Torah as it was given the first day.

There is an individual "today" and a communal "today."

# 245

Insanity is not a pejorative if we transcend our intellect rather than go beneath it.

Some of the most successful people who changed the face of the earth were regarded as crazy.

We applaud that craziness when it gets us ready for Moshiach!

# 246

The most meaningful blessing is when we know that our erstwhile enemy has become our friend.

All of the material aspects of life including our bodies may seem to be our adversaries.

Our mission is to harness them to work for the common cause together.

# 247

In previous generations, the "outside" started at the entrance to our homes.

If there was any darkness, it was not coming from within.

Today, unfortunately, the darkness of the outside has taken up residence inside our homes.

We must therefore bring more light into our homes.

# 248

Only by preserving the integrity of Torah, by giving our children a Torah education that emphasizes its relevance to our lives, can we dispel the darkness of exile and usher in the ultimate Redemption.

# 249

Life begins when our egos diminish and we unite with others.

Great Jewish leaders unify us because they instill the true inner life of Torah into our lives.

## 250

A true Jewish leader has to put the interests of his people—even of one individual—ahead of his own personal interest and prestige.

This was the hallmark of Jewish leadership throughout the ages, and this is one of the signs that we will use to determine the identity of the ultimate leader—Moshiach.

## 251

When a person realizes that a miracle occurred, ironically, the more phenomenal the miracle is, the more the miracle is disconnected to our own world of reality, the less of an impact it will have.

Only when a miracle is somehow anchored in our own sense of reality do we have the capacity to "fathom" the miracle and apply it to our lives.

## 252

A dream is a world in which reality is obscured.

A dream has therefore been employed in Biblical and Talmudic literature as a metaphor for the phenomenon of exile, where the reality of G-d's existence is anything.

A dream is also a mindset that allows for one to be in two worlds simultaneously. Likewise, exile is a state of mind that allows for inconsistencies.

But the dream also contains within it the seeds of the Redemption.

## 253

When the Holy Temple was recaptured by the famed Maccabees, they searched for a bottle of oil that still had the High Priest's seal.

Although they were allowed to use tainted oil, they would not do so, for then they would have won the battle but lost the war.

## 254

Chanukah is unique because it reveals a deeper part of our soul's treasure than most other Holidays.

This will dispel the myth that Chanukah is a minor holiday.

A Holiday that can touch and kindle the soul of every Jew and reveal the uncontaminated core of every Jew is not minor.

## 255

Sarah's special role was to concretize the ideals of Abraham and of all women is to.

She is the model for the unique feminine power; to take the abstract ideas of Torah and translate them into our reality.

## 256

Judaism – for all of its great thinkers and theoreticians – would have gotten nowhere without the Sarah's of the Jewish community who devoted their lives to making these noble concepts a tangible reality.

Indeed, this is the main purpose G-d created the world; to take heaven and introduce it to the earth.

## 257

Judaism is multifaceted.

If we would want to reduce all of Judaism's goals into just a few categories, it can be said that its objective is threefold.

Judaism is about bringing light, holiness and purity, into our own lives, our homes and to the entire world.

These three ideals are the three traits associated with women in particular.

## 258

Pro-active compassion is where one cannot bear to keep the resources they possess for themselves.

A truly kind and compassionate person's need to give, prompts him to become a pro-active giver who seeks out others who are in need.

It is not his own pain that he is trying to assuage, but he is in pain when he cannot give of himself to others.

## 259

Whereas in the present day and age we experience intermittent spurts of growth and a taste of infinity, in the future Messianic Age infinite growth will become an integral part of our lives.

## 260

A marriage is not merely a contract between two parties.

Besides all the legalities that a marriage involves—financial support, etc.—it is the act by which two half souls commit themselves to one another unconditionally, in ways that transcend logic and reason.

Marriage is not a quid-pro-quo contractual relationship.

In marriage one accepts the totality of the other, not just the specific qualities that the other brings to the relationship.

## 261

Marriage, according to the Zohar, is the reunion of two half souls which were separated at birth.

Marriage thus is discovery of another person, a total stranger up till now, who is actually your other half.

## 262

Our prayers are replete with requests for G-d to bring an end to suffering and misery; and end to the exile.

These prayers are punctuated with an urgency. The word "speedily" appears in many of these requests.

When we deal with a mission that will affect the entire world, there is not luxury to delay.

Every minute the process of Redemption is delayed; there is more misery and suffering in the world.

Simple sensitivity demands that we demand that G-d bring us Moshiach immediately.

## 263

The Mincha prayer takes place in middle of the work day.

Our minds are racing with thoughts about what has transpired and what will happen in the next few minutes.

One has to be on a much higher spiritual plane to be able to be in the world and be capable of rising above it without much time to change one's mindset.

# 264

Our unparalleled history of devotion and sacrifice is testimony to the greatness of our fathers and mothers.

Every time we perform a Mitzvah it not only attests to our own loyalty to G-d, it testifies to the devotion of our ancestors as well.

# 265

To ensure that the *Shabbos* is hermetically sealed off from the rest of the week, the woman who lights the *Shabbos* candles hides behind a veil of sorts.

This, in turn, preserves the peaceful aura of *Shabbos*.

Since peace is the greatest receptacle for all of G-d's blessings, the veil is appropriately the medium for the blessing of a good living.

# 266

When we study Torah by searching for new ideas and continually seeing its intricacies and new shades of meaning, we will be prepared for the time when we will see the ultimate novel dimensions of Torah that will be revealed to all of us exclusively by G-d through Moshiach.

The Torah we learn now links us to the future just as it connects us to our past.

## 267

When you see someone who is filled with a passion for something, instead of knocking it and trying to suppress it, be an opportunist and use that love for something positive.

## 268

We are now standing on the cusp of the Final Redemption.

It behooves us to remember that what is most important now is finishing the task and bringing G-d's Master Plan to its conclusion.

## 269

In recent decades, many Jews have returned to Judaism, ironically, through exposure to other mystical religions.

Many Jews who have lost their appreciation for Jewish values and teachings discovered that they could find these mystical teachings in their original, unadulterated form in their own back yard.

## 270

While the men think and talk about the imminence of Geulah, women will make it happen.

# 271

For men, Moshiach and Geulah are real *concepts* and real *ideas*.

For women, Moshiach and Geulah are reality, not just theories, concepts and ideas.

Without the concretization of the Geulah, women cannot be satisfied with just its promise.

# 272

Even a Jew estranged from his or her Judaism possesses a hidden love for G-d embedded deeply in his or her soul.

To arouse this love, one must reflect on G-d's greatness and His presence in our lives, among other meditations.

# 273

Each Mitzvah has infinite value and power.

A Mitzvah is enhanced by the quality of the act.

Yet, the quantity of Mitzvah performances is even more significant.

# 274

Our essence and default position is peace.

War is a necessary evil.

While fighting our battles we should never lose sight that we are above war.

## 275

Our souls are in exile and yearn to be liberated.

Personal redemption is the catalyst for collective redemption.'

## 276

Evil is a façade.

It is hidden good waiting to be revealed.

Our challenge is to see the hidden good by both shunning evil, learning from it and then transforming it.

## 277

Life is a duality.

We are both recipients and donors.

At the very least, what we give should match what we receive.

In the Messianic Age we will realize this duality at its maximum.

# 278

The greatest gift a parent can give his or her child is being a role model.

Moral strength, mutual love and sensitivity of a parent constitute the ideal model.

It is the best we can do to raise good children.

# 279

Acting impulsively is not always a vice.

When we respond, unprepared, to doing good, it is an indication that we have internalized goodness.

# 280

Fighting evil is a positive and even noble cause.

Generating light through positive action is a sublime and Divine endeavor.

# 281

Kindness and faith are twin, complementary virtues.

Faith engenders kindness and kindness makes us receptive to faith.

## 282

The adage "G-d helps those who help themselves" is the foundation of our efforts to bring Moshiach.

We were empowered to get ourselves out of exile.

Let's do it! Let's do it!

## 283

The road to degeneration is often paved with idealism.

The perception that inconsistency is synonymous with hypocrisy is responsible for the unperformed and underperformed Mitzvos.

## 284

Speech is G-d's gift to humanity.

Cherish it and guard it.

G-d also uses speech to make promises.

We ask Him to keep and cherish His promises for a better world.

## 285

Marriage is society's most challenged institution.

If people would only know the true value and the mystical significance of marriage, divorce would become close to obsolete.

## 286

Punishment for the sake of punishment is cruel and unusual from the Torah's vantage point.

Punishment is education and rehabilitation.

## 287

Doing a little bit more than required is not just an incremental addition.

It transforms the act from selfness to otherness.

## 288

Our staying power comes from the most unsuspected sources.

Acting moral when no one would know if we weren't and valuing even small gestures and baby steps is the power behind our nation's immortality.

# 289

It takes chutzpah to live as a moral and observant Jew in our immoral and amoral secularized society.

It is this power of chutzpah that makes our generation unique and qualified for Redemption.

# 290

G-d wants to meet us on our turf.

G-d cherishes our initiatives.

The ultimate G-dly achievement is Moshiach and it depends on us.

# 291

Life is precarious.

The Torah commands us to take precautions that we do not fall off a roof.

Lest someone feels that falling and failing are inevitable, G-d promises us that He will take us into Hs secure embrace.

# 292

The greatest praise for a person is his or her selflessness.

The greatest measure of selflessness is to appear compromised so that others should benefit.

# 293

How do we combat the alienation of the youth?

By teaching them how to open windows between their hearts and their minds.

# 294

How do we combat the alienation of the youth?

By teaching them how to open windows between their hearts and their minds.

# 295

Three are the barriers to spiritual growth:

External pressure, internal moral lapses and the gulf between mind and heart.

The Messianic Age will tackle and remove these three challenges.

# 296

Officers are needed to enforce the law.

Counsellors are needed to make everyone receptive to the law.

# 297

If we would realize the power of our five senses ("gates") we would posts guards to secure them all the time.

Guarded human "gates" would cause all the world's ills to disappear.

# 298

There are two forms of justice: relative and ideal.

Even in the time of exile, we must endeavor to anticipate and incorporate ultimate Messianic justice.

# 299

Intellect is a double-edged sword.

It is true, "a mind is a terrible thing to waste."

Even worse is to waste our minds on rationalizing our behavior.

# 300

Rebellion against authority is embedded in our soul's genes.

Don't try to stifle it.

Channel it to tear down the walls of exile!

# 301

Jewish law is G-d's crown.

The crown serves two functions.

It evokes greater respect for the king's orders.

It's crown Jewel elicits admiration for the king himself.

# 302

We cannot escape being judgmental.

We must therefore also judge ourselves, judge the totality of others and judge fairly.

# 303

We have a public and private persona.

Torah too has two parallel identities; its revealed and concealed teachings.

To nurture both of our personas we must avail ourselves of both dimensions of Torah.

# 304

The most difficult person to change is yourself.

We don't truly know who we are in the core of our soul.

A measure of our lack of moral character is the unintentional lapses in our behavior.

# 305

The question: Which comes first, truth or justice?

The answer: It depends whose truth and whose justice.

# 306

Someone once said, “Democracy is the worst form of government except all others that have been tried.”

There is one form of government that is truly the best; the Messianic version of the monarchy.

# 307

The perennial sport is wrestling with our Animal Soul.

To win the match we must match our strength with positive energy.

# 308

There’s more to the world than the world we see.

But the actions that we take in the world that we see enable us to see beyond our eye’s range.

# 309

We can compromise our interests not our principles.

A compromised justice is an injustice.

## 310

Many are worried about keeping out the negative influences.

The Torah is just as concerned, if not more, with keeping in the positive influences.

## 311

The test of loyalty is when it manifests itself in two opposite ways.

## 312

We live in a misaligned world.

The Holy Temple was a model of a perfect world where all levels were in perfect alignment.

In the Messianic Age the entire world will experience that measure of synchronicity.

## 313

Separation of powers is necessary as a prelude for their unification.

# 314

If you want something enough, don't just patiently wait for it; anticipate it, yearn for it, incorporate it and live it now!

# 315

When you want something good from G-d, don't settle for measured and finite good.

Ask G-d for His infinite goodness.

# 316

We are approaching the time when we can begin to withdraw the accumulated spiritual wealth of thousands of years of Mitzvah observance.

# 317

In our own time, intellectuals formulated the twin evils of Nazism and communism, which unleased havoc on the world and caused the death of tens of millions.

By contrast, knowledge of Torah does not only edify its students, it also refines them, by providing a refuge from the hostile influences of secular society.

In addition, Torah exposes to each of us the positive influences of our own Divine soul.

# 318

Miracles are not intended for show.

Miracles associated with Israel showcased the unique opportunities and empowerment it possesses.

# 319

Birds symbolize soaring high and peace.

There are multiple ways of flying high, kosher and non-kosher.

There is, however, only one definition of peace.

# 320

There are two types of joy: limited and unbounded.

The joy of Simchas Torah is unlimited and enables us to break out of our constraining boundaries.

# 321

Elul, the "heel" of the year, is an extraordinary ordinary month.

It reflects the extraordinary ordinary ("heel") Jews of the last ("heel") generation before the Redemption!

# 322

Unity and harmony in a relationship brings blessing.

The path to unity is by making sure that our internal animal is tamed/kosher.

# 323

Humans always dreamt about flying.

Flying we can, but it should not be an escape from the earth, but to see the world from a higher perch.

# 324

The myth is that evil is stronger than good.

The truth is that while evil is in your face good has staying power.

# 325

Doing good for selfish reasons is acceptable if one's primary interest is the welfare of others.

# 326

Destroying a relationship is a terrible thing.

Restoring a relationship is a wonderful thing.

Creating a totally new and incomparably good relationship is Divine.

## 327

Some people focus on G-d.

Some concentrate on themselves.

And some direct their attention to others.

Our Sages say: "Reflect on [all] *three* things."

## 328

There is a perennial debate:

Which is greater the one who initiates a good project or the one who completes it?

The best of both worlds is to link the beginning with the end.

## 329

There is no greater poverty than hoarding wealth.

There is no greater wealth than sharing it with others.

## 330

The myth is that the more material goods we accumulate the wealthier we are.

The truth is that the more we give away the wealthier we are.

That kind of wealth can never be taken away from us.

## 331

Two people are on a ladder; one is on the top rung and one is on the bottom rung. Which one is closer to the top?

The answer depends on which direction they are going.

## 332

Living in one world is easy.

Straddling the fence between two worlds by compromising each is precarious.

The ability to live fully in both worlds is Divine.

## 333

Empathy is seeing into the inner sanctum of the other's heart and soul.

## 334

There is materialistic selfishness and selflessness.

There is also a form of spiritual selfishness and selflessness.

Assisting others even before we generate positive feelings in giving is spiritual selflessness.

# 335

Human nature impels us to ask *why* there is tragedy.

Torah teaches us to ask *what* we should do to prevent tragedy and heal those who have suffered.

# 336

Tzedakah is the paradigm for all Mitzvos.

Tzedakah is unique because it involves the totality of the person.

Tzedekah liberates the world because it fulfills our very raison d'etre.

# 337

Fighting evil even with violence may be a necessity in an imperfect world.

The *spirit* of fighting should never be institutionalized.

Good deeds and the spirit that inspires them are intrinsically positive and should become engrained within us.

# 338

Jerusalem is a city and a mindset.

Jerusalem is a heightened state of awareness.

Both dimensions are elusive and must be pursued.

# 339

From our vantage-point we see negativity and we have a need to rationalize it.

From G-d's "perch" there is only blessing.

In the imminent Messianic Age we will all see things from His perspective.

# 340

When we are full of ourselves, thinking we know it all or that we have the potential to know it all, we erect a barrier of subjectivity and preconception that does not allow us to be receptive to anything that sits outside our world.

No matter how hard we try to fathom the depths of a subject, it will remain elusive because we are using our own set of lenses to see something that has an entirely different color.

# 341

Divine energy flows in two directions:

From the source to us and from us to the source.

Redemption is when the two flows meet in the middle.

# 342

Even simple emotions contain elements of profundity.

Fear of G-d and self-abnegation are two sides of the same coin.

## 343

Giving your life for a cause is not necessarily the highest level of devotion. It might actually be an expression of one's ego.

Serving G-d in a living body and soul is the ultimate level of devotion.

## 344

Our task is to do everything to remove suffering.

We cannot understand the "why" of misery, but we can learn lessons from it.

The only thing that compounds our suffering is our failure to find a silver lining by learning lessons from it.

## 345

Most people live in the past and the future.

Torah wants us to live in the present.

Teshuvah and Redemption are so powerful because they revolve around the word "now!"

## 346

The word Jew derives from the word gratitude.

Gratitude is not just saying thank-you. It's about conceding the other's importance.

It is also acknowledging the other's role in your good fortune.

Gratitude is liberating and characterizes Moshiach and the Messianic Age.

## 347

Forgetfulness is caused by negative energy associated with exile.

In the Messianic Age we will no longer need teachers and other memory devices to retain our knowledge.

Teachers will then serve a higher purpose.

## 348

Compromise is not necessarily a good word because it takes away from truth.

However, there are compromises that enable and empower us to reach that truth.

The placement of the Mezuzah embodies that compromise.

## 349

There is food for the body and foo for the soul.

Chassidus teaches us that food for the body can also be food for the soul.

## 350

Some forms of fear can be paralyzing.

However, some forms of fear can be positive.

They can actually neutralize the negative forms of fear.

## 351

A sterile mind cannot produce proper emotions.

It is a sign of exile.

## 352

Life is defined by its ability to reproduce.

Our future life as a people hinges on our ability to retain our identities in a sea of other cultures.

## 353

Jews are known to ask a lot of questions.

Jews are also known to answer questions with other questions.

Why are we so obsessed with questions?

Because questions touch raw nerves and produce better results than mere statements!

## 354

The immature always underestimate their potential.

Maturity is appreciating your regal nature.

A Bar Mitzvah begins wearing Tefillin, the symbol of Maturity and royalty.

## 355

Israel exists on two planes: Geographic and Spiritual.

The Mezuzah affixed to our homes creates virtual Israel

## 356

Light is the physical world's most ethereal phenomenon.

Yet light enhances our physical lives even as it is the ultimate metaphor for spirituality.

## 357

Food is a metaphor for spiritual nourishment.

However, food itself contains a spiritual dimension.

It is just as important to insure that that which comes into our mouth is as pure as that which comes out of our mouth.

Reciting the Grace after Meal insures that we capture the spirt of the food and the food of the spirit.

## 358

Poverty constricts, constrains and stifles.

Wealth and abundance causes fragmentation, lack of peace and tranquility.

The Mezuzah is the unifying cure that permits us to enjoy what we have with serenity.

## 359

You can follow all the most recent fads and be old-fashioned.

And you can follow the ancient teachings of Torah and be truly modern.

## 360

Relationships that are quid-pro-quo are fine.

Relationships that are unconditional are Divine.

## 361

By accepting every Jew, regardless of their lowly status, we demonstrate that our love for our fellow is not just predicated on the logical premise that we should accept and

love those who are good role models.

Even those, who do not possess any overt qualities, we still accept and love, simply because they are part of our Jewish community; our shared history, destiny and our very soul.

## 362

While the forces of unmitigated evil have wreaked havoc on the bodies and buildings of thousands of Americans, evil cannot and will not destroy the spirit of our nation and the souls of its victims.

## 363

Shabbos is a day of rest also in the sense that the normal resistance we experience to spiritual matters is neutralized.

## 364

There are times when the echoes of Sinai are muted.

The combined effect of our physical bodies, animal souls, materialistic pursuits and indulgences, transgressions and the very phenomenon of being in a stifling exile can so stifle and mute the sounds of Sinai that we don't even entertain fleeting feelings of Teshuvah.

# 365

There is a unique characteristic associated with thought:

While thought is merely a “garment” of the soul, it is nevertheless a garment that can’t be shed unlike speech and action.

It is an autonomous process and it points to the way the thoughts of a person are more intimately connected to the person’s soul than speech and action.